

IS TWO WARS IN THE MIDDLE EAST NOT ENOUGH?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my deep concern about the military campaign in Libya, one that has been underway the last week and a half.

First off, it's distressing to once again see that Congress's power has been so casually disregarded in our role and responsibility regarding war. There should have been a robust debate in this Chamber about the proper course of action in Libya. The American people deserve it. The Constitution mandates it.

The President gave a fine speech Monday night, as he certainly does, but I found him more eloquent than persuasive. I'm not satisfied that he has made a thorough case for military action against Libya. There are still too many unanswered questions.

What is our responsibility now?

Where does our commitment end?

Does the Pottery Barn rule apply in Libya? If we break it do we own it?

I'm not comforted by the fact that NATO is now in charge of this mission because the fact is, the United States is the dominant force within NATO. Any NATO-led operation is one in which we still bear an enormous responsibility.

And then there's the cost. The Pentagon has acknowledged that it's already spent \$550 million on the Libya operation. That's after 1½ weeks. Mr. Speaker. The bill to the taxpayer could easily climb over \$1 billion. And, Mr. Speaker, at a time when we're already spending close to \$7 billion a month on a failed military occupation in Afghanistan; this, at a time when my friends in the majority want to snap the purse shut on so many important programs the American people need.

There is unquestionably, unquestionably a humanitarian crisis in Libya. I'm appalled, as we all are, about Qadhafi's brutality against his own people. But I fear that that operation will set a dangerous precedent and send us sliding down a slippery slope.

We can't afford to head down a path of perpetual U.S. military engagement around the world. With developing situations in Syria, the Ivory Coast, Congo, Yemen, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera, we can't give up on diplomatic and humanitarian efforts in favor of guns and bombs everywhere there's violence and unrest.

We're already fighting two wars in the Middle East. Is that not enough? Have we learned nothing over the last decade? Have we learned nothing about the danger of open-ended military conflicts where the exit strategy is unclear and victory is ill-defined?

The war in Afghanistan is sapping America of its strength in so many ways. It has cost us in precious taxpayer dollars and has cost us more

than 1,500 of our bravest people. And it is costing us credibility and moral authority in ways that can't even be measured yet or quantified every single day.

The time is now, Mr. Speaker, for less war, not more. Let's stop, let's turn, and let's insist that we don't turn Libya into another black hole. Let's bring our troops home from Afghanistan, and let's give our children a future of peace.

AMERICA'S RISING ENERGY PRICES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. WALBERG) for 5 minutes.

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about a topic that affects every American, rising energy prices. I've spoken on this floor about it before, and I will continue to do so until we increase our energy production here in America, and our dependence on the political earthquake zones of this world is depleted.

While President Obama was traveling in South America, I returned home to my district last week, and I heard from my constituents loud and clear: Gas prices are too high. We need to do something about it. That's why I found it so outrageous and appalling when I heard our President last week offering assistance and encouraging energy production, not here in America, but in Brazil.

No, that's not the right direction. We need to encourage energy production right here at home, not Brazil. We need to develop our offshore energy resources so that jobs can be created here in America, not Brazil. And we need to encourage energy independence so that we return to more reasonable energy costs, not in Brazil, but right here in America.

Mr. Speaker, the time is now to confront this issue and encourage energy exploration and production right here at home. The time is now to create our independence from foreign energy sources and secure our present and future as good stewards of our God-given resources and the blessings of liberty.

THE NATIVE HAWAIIAN GOVERNMENT REORGANIZATION ACT OF 2011

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO) for 5 minutes.

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. Speaker, today a united Hawaii delegation will be introducing the Native Hawaiian Government Reorganization Act in both Chambers of Congress. Long denied the recognition and rights accorded to America's other indigenous people, this bill will finally enable Native Hawaiians to embark on their long awaited process of achieving self-determination.

On the House side, Congresswoman HANABUSA and I have the great pleas-

ure of being joined in this effort by Congressman DON YOUNG, Congressman ENI FALEOMAVAEGA, Congresswoman MADELEINE BORDALLO and Congressman TOM COLE. All are longstanding friends of Hawaii and Native Hawaiians.

How we treat our native indigenous people reflects our values and who we are as a country. Clearly, there is much in the history of our interactions with the native people of what is now the United States that makes us less than proud. The American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians, all indigenous people, have suffered at the hands of our Government. But one of the great attributes of America has always been the ability to look objectively at our history, learn from it, and when possible make amends.

The bill we are introducing today has been more than 10 years in the making. It has been a deliberative and open legislative process. There have been 12 congressional hearings on Native Hawaiian recognition, five of which were held in Hawaii. These bills have been marked up by committees in both Chambers. The House has passed Native Hawaiian recognition bills three times: First in 2000, again in 2007, and most recently just last year.

The goals and purposes of the Native Hawaiian Government Reorganization Act are consistent with the history of the Native Hawaiian people and the record of United States involvement in Hawaii. The bill is also consistent with over 188 existing Federal laws that promote the welfare of Native Hawaiian people.

I know there are Members who question these authorized programs simply because Native Hawaiian is in the title, which is exactly why we need this bill. It will formalize the very special political and legal relationship between the United States and the Native Hawaiians by providing a process through which the Native Hawaiian community can reorganize its governing entity within this relationship. This is how we treat Alaska Natives and American Indians, and this is how we should treat Native Hawaiians.

The Kingdom of Hawaii was overthrown in 1893. Hawaii's last monarch, Queen Liliuokalani, was deposed by an armed group of businessmen and sugar planters who were American by birth or heritage, with the support, abetted by U.S. troops. The Queen agreed to relinquish her throne, under protest, to avoid bloodshed.

□ 1040

She believed the United States, with which Hawaii had diplomatic relations, would restore her to the throne.

There may be new Members to this body who have not had occasion to learn the history of Hawaii, and I extend an open invitation to those Members to share this history with you.

The State of Hawaii motto, which is also the motto of the Kingdom of Hawaii, is, "Ua mau ke ea o ka aina i ka